DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 382 974 CS 214 856

AUTHOR Dalipagic-Czimazia, Catherine
TITLE Dostoyevsky and Europe. A Secondary Education for Europe.
INSTITUTION Council for Cultural Cooperation, Strasbourg (France).
REPORT NO ISBN-92-871-2277-6
PUB DATE 93
NOTE 83p.; French Edition: Dostoievski et l'Europe, ISBN-92-871-2276-8.
AVAILABLE FROM Manhattan Publishing Company, 1 Croton Point Avenue, P.O. Box 650, Croton, NY 10520.
PUB TYPE Historical Materials (060)

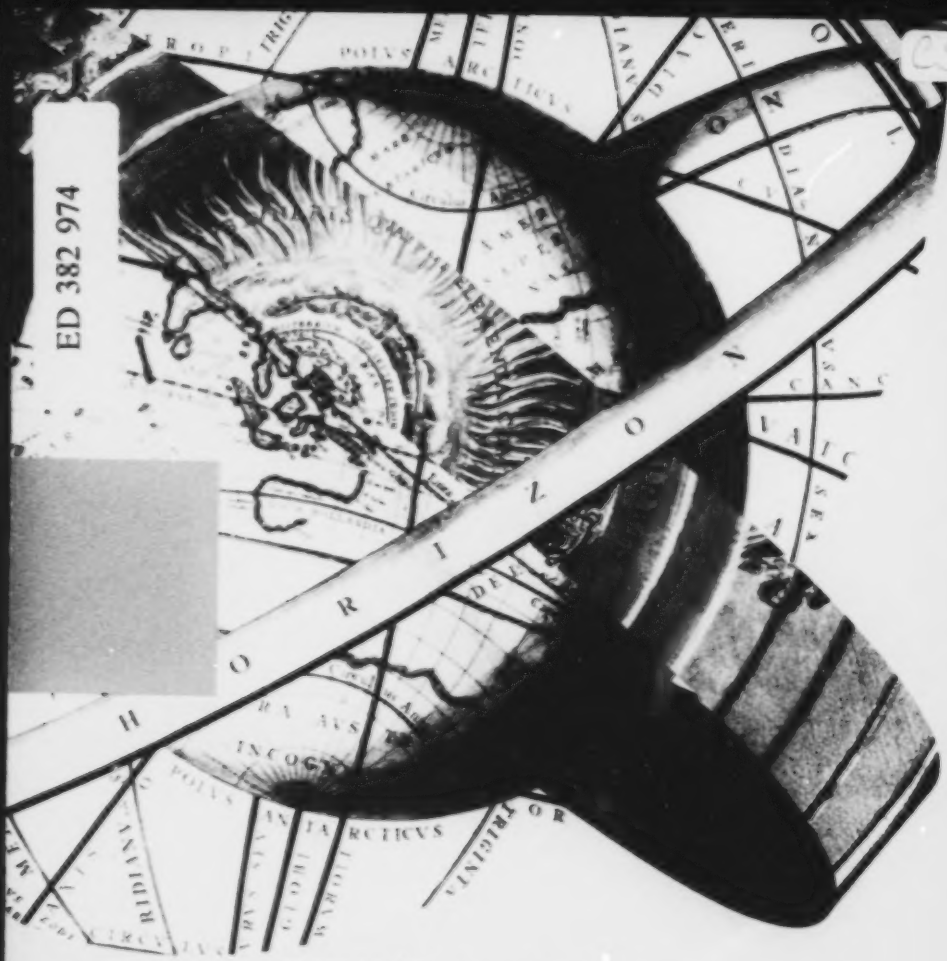
EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Authors; *Cultural Context; *Cultural Influences; Foreign Countries; Literary Criticism; *Nineteenth Century Literature; Secondary Education; Social Influences
IDENTIFIERS Classics (Literature); *Dostoevsky (Fyodor); Europe; Historical Background; Nineteenth Century; *Russia

ABSTRACT

The overarching theme of this monograph is how a Russian intellectual, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, saw himself in the European context. By reference to various of Fyodor Dostoyevsky's romanesque works, the monograph proposes an account of the development of the European awareness of an author nevertheless greatly attached to his native land, and of his influence on European culture. Sections of the monograph discuss the influence of European culture on Dostoyevsky; his attitude towards Europe; his socio-political, religious and philosophical ideas in relation to Europe; and his contribution to European culture. The monograph concludes that through his quest for a spiritual principle, through his longing for justice but also for freedom, and through his aspiration towards the ideal, Dostoyevsky ranks with the greatest European thinkers. Six one-page "working texts" (excerpts from novels) of Charles Dickens, Dostoyevsky, and Albert Camus; and a time line relating events in Dostoyevsky's life and works to cultural, political, social, and artistic life in Russia and in Europe are attached. (RS)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 382 974



"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN **OTHER THAN PAPER COPY** HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

N. Borch – Jacobsen

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)"

CS 314856

Secondary education

Dostoyevsky and Europe

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Council of Europe
Conseil de l'Europe

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

Dostoyevsky and Europe

by Mrs Catherine Dalipagic-Czimazia
under supervision of
Mrs Annick Benoît and Mr Guy Fontaine
«Lettres européennes»

A Secondary Education for Europe
Council for Cultural Co-operation

Council of Europe Press, 1993

French Edition:
Dostoïevski et l'Europe
ISBN 92-871-2276-8

Strasbourg, Council of Europe, Publishing and Documentation Service
ISBN 92-871-2277-6
© Council of Europe, 1993
Printed in Germany

The **Council of Europe** was founded in 1949 to achieve greater unity between European parliamentary democracies. It is the oldest of the European political institutions and has 32 member States,[1] including the 12 members of the European Community. It is the widest intergovernmental and interparliamentary grouping in Europe, and has its headquarters in the French city of Strasbourg.

Only questions related to national defence are excluded from the Council of Europe's work, and the Organisation has activities in the following areas: democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms; media and communication; social and economic affairs; education, culture, heritage and sport; youth; health; environment and regional planning; local democracy; and legal co-operation.

The **European Cultural Convention** was opened for signature in 1954. This international treaty is open to European countries that are not members of the Council of Europe, and it enables them to take part in the Organisation's programmes on education, culture, sport and youth. So far, 38 States have acceded to the European Cultural Convention: the Council of Europe's full member states plus Albania, Belarus, Croatia, the Holy See, Latvia, Russia, Slovenia.

The **Council for Cultural Co-operation** (the **CDCC**) is responsible for the Council of Europe's work on education and culture. Four specialised committees – the Education Committee, the Standing Conference on University Problems, the Culture Committee and the Cultural Heritage Committee – help the CDCC to carry out its tasks under the European Cultural Convention. There is also a close working relationship

1. Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom.

between the CDCC and the regular conferences of specialised European ministers responsible for education, culture and cultural heritage.

The CDCC's programmes are an integral part of the Council of Europe's work, and, like the programmes in other sectors, they contribute to the Organisation's three over-arching policy objectives for the 1990s:

– the protection, reinforcement and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms and pluralist democracy;

– the promotion of an awareness of European identity;

– the search for common responses to the great challenges facing European society.

The CDCC's education programme covers school, higher and adult education, as well as educational research. At present, its main priorities are projects on: the European dimension of secondary education; university co-operation; adult education and social change; modern languages; and the pooling of the results of educational research.

In 1991, the Council for Cultural Co-operation of the Council of Europe launched a Project entitled "A secondary education for Europe". The aims of the Project are to:

i. give young people the knowledge, skills and attitudes they will need to meet the major challenges of European society;

ii. prepare young people for higher education, and for mobility, work and daily life in a multilingual and multicultural education;

iii. make young people aware of their common cultural heritage and their shared responsibilities as Europeans.

This Project has two elements: the first devoted to reflections and consultations between the member States on the overall policies and strategies, and the second on The European dimension in the school curriculum.

The aim of this series of monographs is to present succinctly either practical experiences of integrating the European dimension into school or out-of-school life, or examples of contents or themes which could be the basis of reflections or discussions for teachers.

Since the aim of these monographs is to give rise to discussions and exchanges of views, the opinions and judgments contained in them are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the Council of Europe and its Council for Cultural Co-operation on the subjects dealt with.

List of monographs

- Teaching about society, passing on values – Elementary law in civic education
  ISBN 92-871-2300-4
- Teaching for exchanges – Aims and ways of teacher-training
  ISBN 92-871-2279-2
- European Clubs
  ISBN 92-871-2281-4

The opinions expressed in this work are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the Council for Cultural Co-operation of the Council of Europe nore of the Secretariat.

All correspondence concerning this publication or the reproduction or translation of all or part of the document should be addressed to the Director of Education, Culture and Sport of the Council of Europe (F-67075 Strasbourg Cedex).

The reproduction of extracts is authorised, except for commercial purposes, on condition that the source is quoted.

Contents

Pages

The influence of European culture on Dostoyevsky 10

1. Influence of European literature 10
   a. Idealism 11
   b. The exploration of human complexity 11
   c. The craft of writing 12
2. The influence of European history and philosophy 12
3. Influence of the Fine Arts 13

Dostoyevsky's attitude towards Europe 14

1. The Petersburg Chronicles 15
2. Winter Notes on Summer Impressions 17

Dostoyevsky's socio-political, religious and philosophical ideas in relation to Europe 22

1. Socio-political ideas 22
   a. Socialism in question 23
   b. Capitalism in question 25
   c. The indictment of western civilisation 27
2. Religious and philosophical ideas 30
   a. Religious development 30
   b. Dostoyevsky and Catholicism 32
   c. Dostoyevsky and the Russian idea 34
   d. Freedom and personality in Dostoyevsky 35

Dostoyevsky's contribution to European culture 38

1. The polyphonic novel 38
2. "Dostoyevsky is the only man who has taught .... me anything about psychology" (Nietzsche) 40
3. "If God does not exist, all is permitted" 41

Conclusion 44

Working texts 47

Text No. 1 Dickens, *The Old Curiosity Shop* 49

Text No. 2 Dostoyevsky, *A Raw Youth* 51
Questions 52

Text No. 3 Dostoyevsky, *The Devils* 53
Questions 54

Text No. 4 Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov* 55
Questions 57

Text No. 5 Dostoyevsky, *Notes from Underground* 59

Text No. 6 Camus, *The Fall* 61
Questions 62

Tables 63

1821-1826 64-65
1827-1834 66-67
1835-1841 68-69
1842-1847 70-71
1848-1852 72-73
1853-1859 74-75
1860-1866 76-77
1867-1872 78-79
1873-1879 80-81
1880-1881 82-83

Is Russia really like the riddle of the Sphinx[1] for westerners, as Dostoyevsky claimed? And did Dostoyevsky, for his part, always understand Europe? Even today, it is not easy to describe Europe. At a time of European economic and political construction, the question of what it means to be a European is at the forefront of everyone's mind and is being fiercely debated. In the light of this question, the work of that old "European Russian", as Dostoyevsky styled himself, assumes fresh relevance one hundred years on. In considering the writer's relationship with Europe, we are led, as was Dostoyevsky, far ahead of his time, to think about the deep-rooted values that can or should be those of Europe both in the present and in the future.

Although he was a man who made a great contribution to European culture, he was not always particularly indulgent towards that culture. Its influence upon him was, however, considerable.[2] The *Petersburg Chronicles* and the *Winter Notes on Summer Impressions* both reveal a change in Dostoyevsky's attitude towards Europe. Then again, Dostoyevsky's socio-political, religious and philosophical outlook reflects the complexity of his relationship with Europe.

We shall also consider the relevance of Dostoyevsky's works to contemporary time and his contribution to European culture. This study, though non-exhaustive, will perhaps help to clarify Dostoyevsky's role in developing a European cultural identity and generating greater awareness thereof. Is it not the essence of Europe, over and above a purely dialectical process, to make diversity a guarantee of unity?

1. *Dostoyevsky, The Complete Works*, Izd. Nauka, Leningrad, 1976 Vol. 18, p. 41.
2. Jacques Catteau, *La création littéraire chez Dostoïevski*, I.E.S., Paris 1978.

The influence of European culture on Dostoyevsky

1. The influence of European literature

"Man is a mystery", wrote Dostoyevsky to his brother, "a mystery that has to be fathomed and, if one dedicates one's entire life to that end, let it not be said that one has wasted one's time. I am giving my attention to this mystery because I want to be a man." In order to comprehend man's psychological approach, it was necessary to be conversant with world literature.

Dostoyevsky's first love was the theatre, which had an influence on his works (Pushkin, Schiller, Shakespeare). His imagination was excited by fiction and he read Goethe, Victor Hugo, Lamartine and George Sand in the original versions.

The writings of the French historians Thiers, Mignet and Louis Blanc on the French Revolution and of the German and American historians F Schlosser and W Prescott stimulated his interest in real events. Dostoyevsky's view of the world was also strongly influenced by his reading of Biblical texts, especially the Book of Job. The folk tales that his parents or nurses read to him as a child developed his imagination and his inclination towards the world of emotions and dreams. His reading of the Gothic novels of the English eighteenth-century writer Ann Radcliffe, which recount frightening adventures in a style that blends realism and the fantastic, revealed the world of the novel to him. Three types of writer had a decisive influence on the development of Dostoyevsky as a writer: the "idealisers", the "Promethean writers" and the "masters of form".[1]

1. Jacques Catteau, ibid. a. *Idealism*

a. Idealism

Schiller's idealism and his revolt in the cause of a higher order were a source of inspiration to the young Dostoyevsky. He was also profoundly moved by the works of George Sand, by her "aspiration to perfection and purity", and by her foretelling of the coming of a happier age for humanity. The proud and dominating women who appear in Dostoyevsky's fiction are reminiscent of those who appear in her work. Dostoyevsky also felt close to Dickens, Cervantes and Hugo in their quest for an ideal world. All three sought to portray a spiritually perfect man: Pickwick, Don Quixote and Jean Valjean. The characters of the Idiot and Alyosha Karamazov in Dostoyevsky bear witness to the same attempt:

"All those writers, whether in our country or in the West, who have sought to depict absolute beauty, have never reaped any reward for their pains. Because the task is excessive. Beauty is an ideal state, and we are still a long way from achieving an ideal state, either here or in civilised Europe! There exists in the world only one absolutely beautiful being, Christ".

Although the pure, good and healthy being might be ridiculed and rejected by society, faith in an ideal world was more important for Dostoyevsky than truth.

b. The exploration of human complexity

The "Promethean" writers are Shakespeare (seen by Dostoyevsky as a prophet who had come "to announce to us the secret of man and of the human soul"), Balzac, Goethe, Pushkin, Gogol, Byron and Lermontov, who explore the workings of human nature in society and in history. Their heroes are victims, the insulted and injured (like Balzac's Eugénie Grandet or Faust's Marguerite) or demoniacal figures, proud and strong, beyond ordinary morality.

c. The craft of writing

Dostoyevsky learned the writer's craft from the popular story-tellers of his time. For him the "masters of form" were the authors of picaresque novels, the nineteenth-century French serial writers like Eugène Sue. The description of the fever of modern city life in *Les Mystères de Paris*, the symbolism of places and the mixture of realism and the fantastic were a source of inspiration to Dostoyevsky.

The literature of suffering, in particular *The Confessions of an English Opium Eater* by De Quincey and *Contes fantastiques* by Hoffmann, showed Dostoyevsky that the supernatural and the fantastic opened the way to a deeper knowledge of man and the human mind.

2. The influence of European history and philosophy

Dostoyevsky's keen interest in the economic and social history of his time provided him with insights into ideology that proved invaluable when he came to write his major novels. He gravitated from the Utopian socialism of his youth to Slavophilism, then to Pan-Slavism. In Petrashevsky's circle, which he frequented from 1847, St-Simon, Proudhon, Louis Blanc, Fourrier, Engels and Marx were fiercely debated. That period came to an end in 1849 when Dostoyevsky was sentenced to hard labour. The journal *Time*, edited by the two Dostoyevsky brothers from 1861 to 1863, revealed to its readers the various trends in European political economy and philosophy. Within its pages idealists and materialists sparred with one another.

When *Time* was banned it was followed by the journal *Epoch* (1864). Dostoyevsky launched out against materialism and socialism which Strahov and Vladislavlev linked together in their articles.

Around 1864 Dostoyevsky shifted towards Pan-Slavism and read the great Slavophile writers and, in particular,

NY Danilevsky's book Russia and Europe, published in 1869, which expounded a cultural and historical typology of peoples very close to the conclusions of Dostoyevsky himself.

3. The influence of the Fine Arts

Dostoyevsky's European travels broadened his artistic culture. His interest in architecture was limited to its symbolic aspects (the cast-iron and steel Crystal Palace, which he saw in London in 1862, or the Gothic cathedrals). The paintings featured in Dostoyevsky's work are there mainly for their allegorical value. For example, the Sistine Madonna in Dresden represents the ideal of perfect beauty attained through suffering. Lorrain's landscape of Acis and Galatea is the landscape of the Golden Age, of universal harmony.

Dostoyevsky's attitude towards Europe

Since the time when, as a child, he listened, enthralled, to his parents reading to him the stories of Ann Radcliffe, Dostoyevsky had dreamed of Europe. He had to wait until he was forty years old before going there for the first time, in June 1862:

"I shall be granted at a single glance a bird's-eye view of the country of the holy miracles, like the Promised Land. In short, the result will be a number of marvellous new and powerful impressions."

In the course of two and a half months' travelling, he visited Germany, England, Italy and France, after which he wrote *Winter Notes on Summer Impressions* (1863). Throughout his life he regularly went to Europe, either to flee his creditors or to seek treatment for the epileptic fits from which he suffered. He spent a long period abroad from 1867 to 1871 after his second marriage.

The west is a constant leitmotif in Dostoevsky's work, whether in his literary writings or in the articles he wrote for periodicals. Many of the heroes of Dostoyevsky's novels are uprooted. Their childhood or adolescence has been spent in Europe, far from Russia, or else their view of the world has been shaped by a period of time spent in the west. Examples are Alyosha Alkovsky in *The Insulted and Injured*, who has frequented the Utopian idealistic circles of the west, the hero of *Notes from Underground*, poisoned by western culture, the hero of *The Gambler*, a typical Russian living abroad, The *Idiot*, who, uprooted from his land, returns to Russia after spending his adolescence in Europe, and the heroes of *The Devils*.

Dostoyevsky's articles as a journaiist in *Time* and *Epoch*, or as the editor of the *Citizen*, and particularly *The Diary of a Writer* in 1873, 1876 and 1877 (a collection of the articles

published in the *Citizen*), are full of remarks about Europe, the historical evolution of humanity, the foreign policy of certain European countries like France or Germany, and the role to be played by European culture in Russia. How is the influence of Europe to be interpreted in the history of Russia and what will the future of Russia be? Should Russia follow the example of the west, as shown by Peter the Great, or reject western influence which turns her away from her own authentically Slav destiny?

This question, at the heart of the polemic between Westernists and Slavophiles in the 1840s, was also at the centre of Dostoyevsky's thinking.

Dostoyevsky's position was to change in the course of his life, shifting from Westernism to nationalistic Slavophilism and, indeed, conservatism, and culminating in an attempt to reconcile the two camps in the speech on Pushkin which he delivered one year before his death in 1880 and which aroused considerable enthusiasm among Russian intellectuals.

1. The Petersburg Chronicles

Dostoyevsky's youth was marked by the influence of Schillerian idealism and romanticism and by the socialist ideas of the French Utopians. His five *Petersburg Chronicles* written in 1847 bear the traces of the twenty-six-year-old's Westernism. St. Petersburg, the symbol of the window open onto Europe so desired by Peter I, is described with enthusiasm, even though "all is chaos here."[1] In that city, action, life and movement are all concentrated. The contrast with Moscow, the capital of the Slavophiles, is ironically pointed out: "It is only in Moscow that people rest before action. In St. Petersburg they rest after action."[2] St. Petersburg holds

1. Dostoyevsky, *Chroniques pétersbourgeoises*, in *Dostoyevsky, Récits, Chroniques et Polémiques*, La Pléiade, Gallimard, Paris, 1969.
2. Ibid., p. 240.

17

the meaning of history and the future: that city "is still being built, it is becoming more deeply rooted day by day (...) throughout Russia which draws its life force from St. Petersburg alone."[1]

Economic, cultural and scientific life is considered, not without exaggeration, to be entirely concentrated in that city:

"Everything – industry, science, literature, culture, the beginning and development of life in society – everything draws life and support from St. Petersburg alone."[2]

Ideas inherited from the epoch of the Enlightenment are perceptible here. For instance, the importance of education and the steadfast exercise of an activity are linked to individual self-fulfilment and happiness:

"Happiness (...) lies in constant, untiring activity and in dedication to the realization of all our inclinations and abilities (...) Let us try to take the first step towards a better and more useful activity..."[3]

A few discordant notes appear, however, which prefigure the criticisms to come. The incongruous, superficial aspect of certain infatuations with the west is ridiculed. For example, one man refused to wear a pelisse coat in winter and continued to sport an overcoat cut in the European style; he died of cold:

"The Europeanism of this gentleman amounted to no more than a well-cut outfit, and it was this that made him love Europe for its culture."[4]

Modern life, respect for the proprieties and a sense of moderation in society stand in contrast with the love of immoderation peculiar to the Russian people. Thus a crowd, assembled in the Summer Garden for a celebration, listens in a state of

1. Dostoyevsky, *Chroniques péterbourgeoises*, p. 240.
2. Ibid., *Chroniques péterbourgeoises III*, p. 268.
3. Ibid., *Chroniques péterbourgeoises V*, p. 275.
4. Ibid., *Chroniques péterbourgeoises V*, p. 275.

boredom and decorum to recitals of western music while "dreaming trepak, balalaika, coats unbuckled, vodka galore brimming over, in a word all that makes it possible to let one's hair down and unwind in true Russian style."[1]

The desire to express a national identity is asserted and does not yet run counter to the trend towards the west championed by Peter the Great:

"What we are seeing in this present trend is not the disappearance of nationality but the triumph of a nationality which does not seem to be allowing itself to be annihilated under the influence of Europe as easily as some people think."[2]

Dostoyevsky ends with a description of the inhabitant of St. Petersburg, seen as being completely incapable of any kind of systematic thinking, unsuited to reality, thirsting for direct, raw experience and unable to work with love (unlike the "meticulous and systematic" German). He deplores that purely Russian capacity which consists in "doing one's job by force and badly without any conscientious effort and, as they say, letting oneself go completely."[3]

The western "transplant" has not yet "taken" on the Russian organism, and Dostoyevsky develops the striking image of the "dreamer". Eager for activity but of a weak character, the dreamer has fled reality to seek refuge in an imaginary, fantastic realm, cut off from everybody. Dostoyevsky hints at the autobiographical aspect of this figure: "Are we not all to some extent dreamers?."[4]

2. Winter Notes on Summer Impressions

Then, in 1849, after attending meetings organised by the socialists Petrashevsky and Speshnev, Dostoyevsky was

---

1. Dostoyevsky, *Chroniques péterbourgeoises*, p. 242.
2. Ibid., *Chroniques péterbourgeoises IV*, p. 268.
3. Ibid.,*Chroniques péterbourgeoises V*, p. 275.
4. Ibid., *Chroniques péterbourgeoises*, p. 280.

arrested. The four years of hard labour and the six years of exile were the period when he discovered the Russian people and the deep split that existed between that people and the westernised elite. For this he blamed Peter I's reform:

"The people turned away from Peter's reform one hundred and seventy years ago, and since then has split away from the cultivated class and has lived its own separate, individual independent life."[1]

On his return from exile, his brother Mikhail and he received permission to bring out a journal, *Time* (1861-1863), in which he published his *Winter Notes on Summer Impressions*, written after his first journey abroad. Dostoyevsky described them as "light sketches, fleeting, personal impressions", not as strictly accurate factual accounts. There were, he said, many mistakes in them, but they were intended first and foremost to be sincere.

From this brief experiment Dostoyevsky was to draw general conclusions which were to tie in with the grass-roots ideology he wished to illustrate in *Time*. His quest for a Russian national specificity and his desire to distance himself from Europe were forcefully expressed:

"Our entire existence, since early childhood, has been modelled on European patterns (...) How is it that we have not yet changed ourselves into Europeans?"[2]

Only mothers and their loving care preserved cultivated Russians from foreign influence and instilled into them the spirit and love of the Russian people and the Russian language. Pushkin would not have been Pushkin, that is profoundly Russian, without his nurse Arina Rodionovna. From

1. Dostoyevsky, *Le Temps*, in *Récits, Chroniques et polémiques*, La Pléiade, Gallimard, Paris, 1969, p. 963.

2. Dostoyevsky, *Notes d'hiver*, in *Récits, Chroniques et polémiques*, La Pléiade, Gallimard, Paris, 1969, p. 1436.

this he deduced that there existed "a chemical affinity between the mind of man and his native soil." [1]

During his journey to Europe Dostoyevsky meditated on Russian history and the influence of European culture. He was already beginning to feel some hostility, not so much towards Europe as towards the purportedly progressive and westernised Russians.

In the eighteenth century European and particularly French influence was felt to be "the most agreeable tutelage". However the assimilation of foreign culture was superficial; it was physical: "You put on silk stockings, donned a wig and hung by your side a wicked blade and thus became a European."[2] Morally, Russians remained the same, the noble was the closest to the people, even though he continued to whip his muzhiks to death. All his shortcomings were redeemed by his simplicity and his closeness to the people:

"The 'lords' took bribes, bled people white, robbed, kowtowed with pious humility and lived off the fat of the land without a single worry."[3]

In the early nineteenth century a special type of Russian European appeared, Chatsky (the hero of Griboyedov's play Woe from Wit), who longs for Russia but returns to Europe as he suffers from a feeling of uselessness in Russia.

The mid-nineteenth century saw the emergence of a type known as the "progressive" man, self-satisfied, educated in the European style, impervious to doubt, contemptuous of the people and sure of his civilising mission. His ignorance of his native land, of his people and of the distinctive national character is equalled only by his smug self-assurance.

---

1. Dostoyevsky, *Notes d'hiver*, in *Récits, Chroniques et polémiques*, La Pléiade, Gallimard, Paris, 1969, p. 1436.
2. Ibid., p. 1444.
3. Ibid., p. 1445.

This was the state of mind in which Dostoyevsky arrived in Europe. He was not a tourist; he was seeking above all to form an overall picture of the European man and to find a confirmation of his own philosophy. Parisians struck him by their self-satisfaction, and Dostoyevsky ironically exclaimed: "Paris is the most moral and most virtuous of all the cities in the world. What order! Everything is neat and proper like music paper!" It was a place where the human soul shrunk and shrivelled up, because in Paris there reigned "a colossal inner, spiritual regulation, springing from the soul."[1]

Baal was worshipped just as much in London as in Paris. However, London with its contrasts, its disorder, its huge size, was better suited to Dostoyevsky. The moral judgment he brought to bear on the smug middle class and the inequalities of capitalism reveals a certain admiration: "Even from the outside, what a difference from Paris! This city always a-bustle night and day, immense like the sea, the roaring and rumbling of machines, these railways flung over houses (and soon beneath houses), this boldness of endeavour, this apparent disorder which is essentially the highest degree of bourgeois order, this poisoned Thames, this coal-infested air, these magnificent squares and parks and these frightful streets in a borough like Whitechapel with its half-naked, savage and starving population. The City with its millions and worldwide trade, the Crystal Palace, the Universal Exhibition (...)

Yes, the Exhibition is astounding. You feel the terrifying force that has assembled there all these countless people from all over the world in a single herd; you become aware of a Titanic thought, you feel that here something has already been attained, that here there is victory, here there is triumph."[2]

---

1. Dostoyevsky, *Notes d'hiver*, in *Récits, Chroniques et polémiques*, La Pléiade, Gallimard, Paris, 1969, pp. 1461, 1462.
2. Ibid., p. 1463.

There the triumphant middle class unashamedly rubbed shoulders with the pathetically poor workers. In Paris the hypocrisy was more obvious: the bourgeoisie sought to avert its eyes from the poor. The picture painted by Dostoyevsky is a cruel one. The typical traits of the French bourgeois are: love of money, hypocrisy, fear of the socialists, false sentimentality, a sycophantic press, profound selfishness, inordinate pride and a spurious nobility of heart. The political and private life of the French is subjected to an unsparing criticism.

23

Dostoyevsky's socio-political, religious and philosophical ideas in relation to Europe

Dostoyevsky's novels address philosophical, religious, metaphysical and ideological issues. His characters suffer and struggle, possessed by their ideas. As Bakhtin has shown, "In Dostoyevsky every opinion becomes a living being and is inseparable from an incarnate human voice". To seek to give too systematic and too one-sided a view of these issues would be to disregard one of the hallmarks of Dostoyevsky's novels, which is their polyphony, in other words, the essential multiplicity of levels and voices, the importance of dialogue and the co-existence and interaction of conflicting ideas. The journalistic articles provide a more direct expression of the author's voice, especially *The Diary of a Writer* (1873-76-77-80).

For Dostoyevsky, the attempt to establish a Russian national identity constantly turns around these two poles: are we or are we not Europeans?

1. Socio-political ideas

Before his prison sentence, Dostoyevsky was drawn to western socialist theories and tried to apply them in practice by founding an association. He thus naturally effected the transition from romantic idealism to socialism in which he found the promise of a complete transformation of life. He wrote in *The Diary of a Writer* (1873): "Nascent socialism was then compared, even by some of its leaders,with Christianity of which it was considered to be no more than a correction and an improvement, in keeping with the age and civilisation."[1] The appeal of Fourierism to Dostoyevsky was already dictated by aesthetic considerations and by a sense of

1. Motchoulski C., *Dostoïevski*, Payot, Paris, 1963, p. 96.

humanity: "Fourierism (...) charms the soul by its beauty (...) exudes a love of humanity. In this system there is no hatred."

But soon, as a result of influences from Germany, Utopian socialism gave way to a materialistic socialism whose foundations were laid by Feuerbach and Marx. In 1845 the leader of the Russian Westerners, Belinsky, became a militant atheist for whom the advent of socialism meant the abolition of religion, which was the source of the moral foundations of society. Dostoyevsky was to confess that he then "embraced the entire doctrine of Belinsky" who would not have hesitated to cut off hundreds of thousands of heads for the sake of the happiness of the majority. Dostoyevsky even denied "the radiant personality of Christ", which triggered a profound moral crisis in him.

a. Socialism in question

After his time spent in the Omsk labour camp, Dostoyevsky, whose sole reading matter at the time had been the Bible given to him by a Decembrist's wife, experienced a revelation. His conscious religious conversion dates from the night of Easter 1854: "I felt that the sky was descending upon the earth and was absorbing me completely. I contained God and throughout my being I felt myself entirely penetrated by Him. Yes, God exists! I cried."[1]

On his return from exile, Dostoyevsky turned his attention to the materialistic and utilitarian socialists of the 1860s and to the western rationalism they represented. He turned away for good from socialism, which became one of the targets of his *Notes from Underground*, written in 1864. The man from underground is nineteenth-century man. He has had a western education and represents the intelligentsia of the "Petersburg period of Russian history", uprooted from his

1. Evdokimov, *P. Gogol et Dostoïevski ou la descente aux enfers*, Desclée de Brower, Bruges, 1961, p. 219.

native land and people. He is an individualist, unable to act because he is too aware. A contemporary Hamlet, he rejects the temptation of "moral, sensible men" who claim to build human happiness on rational foundations and the principle of knowing where one's advantage lies. All forms of enforced, rationalised social organisation, and of utilitarian "earthly paradise", if paid for with a loss of freedom (whether Fourier's phalanstery or communist society), represent the "House of the Dead", a palace with a fence around it, the cast-iron and glass Crystal Palace, the symbol of Chernyshevsky's utopia. The socialist paradise is an ant-hill, a henhouse which the man from underground refuses to take for a palace.

This first criticism of socialism and of humanitarian utilitarianism was to continue in his other novels. In 1867 Dostoyevsky attended the Peace congress in Geneva where he heard a speech by Bakunin. He saw the true leaders of socialism and world revolution who preached atheism, the abolition of the great states and private property.

In a letter to Sofya Ivanov he wrote: "and the main thing is iron and fire, and when everything is destroyed, then, as they see it, peace will be established."[1] The image of the theoretician of destruction is to be found in the character of Shigalyov in *The Devils*, the inventor of a new system "for organising the world". Heaven on earth will be realised through despotism. "Slaves must be equal: without despotism there has never been any freedom or equality, but in a herd there is bound to be equality."[2]

This contradiction between the end and the means, between a humanitarian ideal (the happiness of humanity) and the enslavement of men, is given its finest expression in the legend of the Great Inquisitor imagined by Ivan Karamazov.

1. C. Motchoulski, *Dostoïevski*, Payot, Paris, 1963, p. 273.
2. Dostoyevsky, *The Devils*, Penguin Classics, 1953, p. 418.

The Great Inquisitor, an ascetic and philanthropic 90-year-old man, has chosen to secure the happiness of humanity by providing man with food, even if it means depriving him of his freedom. Between bread and freedom, he has chosen bread. He reproaches Christ, before whom he justifies his own action, for not having satisfied the material needs of humanity: "Do you see the stones in this parched and barren desert? Turn them into loaves, and mankind will come running after you like a flock of sheep, grateful and obedient."[1] But Christ preferred to respect man's freedom and refused the temptation of the spirit of Evil. He did not wish to buy obedience with bread. Bread is the symbol of atheistic socialism, but also of the Catholic Church.

b. Capitalism in question

It is true that Dostoyevsky irrevocably condemned atheistic socialism, but he nonetheless rejected western capitalism and the first signs of capitalism in Russia in the name of that same materialism that he found fault with in the socialists. This materialism caused moral values to be overthrown. The coveting of material goods was a characteristic feature of the western bourgeois: "It has become the supreme moral imperative – the catechism – of the Parisian to amass a fortune and possess the largest possible number of personal goods."[2]

In America, where some of Dostoyevsky's heroes dreamed of emigrating, capitalism had developed to a more advanced degree than in Europe. Kiriyov and Shatov, going off to America for four months to experience the social conditions of workers in the west, are exploited and even beaten by their boss. There is no mistaking Dostoyevsky's irony: far from

1. Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, Penguin Classics, 1958, p. 296.
2. Dostoyevsky, *Notes d'hiver sur des impressions d'été*, in *Récits, Chroniques et polémiques*, La Pléiade, Gallimard, Paris, 1969, p. 1473.

pouring out curses, they all approved "the spiritualism, the lynchings, the revolvers, the hoboes."[1]

The socialists or the communists themselves could turn out to be formidable capitalists. For instance, Liputin in *The Devils* is a Fourierist and "more than anything else a usurious capitalist."[2] The idealist Stepan Trofimovich asks the question: "How is it that all these out-and-out socialists, all these communists, are at the same time the harshest and most selfish landowners?"[3]

The laws in the west were not consonant with basic moral values and served only to defend capital accumulation. Thus, in France, "the code clearly defines item by item a petty theft, like that of a piece of bread, and a major act of larceny on highly virtuous grounds. The latter is protected, encouraged, properly organised."[4]

The worship of Baal is the basis of western civilisation. His symbol is the Crystal Palace at the Universal Exhibition of London. It embodies both the socialist and the capitalist anthill, the docile herd subjected to the triumph of matter:

"It is a kind of image from the Bible, a kind of Babel, a kind of prophecy of the Apocalypse being fulfilled before your eyes. You feel that this requires enormous power of resistance and age-old defiance not to succumb (...) not to bow to reality and not to deify Baal, in other words, not to take what exist for the ideal."[5]

There is no room for doubt, refusal or scepticism which alone are born of awareness linked to suffering and a yearning after the Ideal.

---

1. Dostoyevsky, *The Devils*, Penguin Classics, p. 116.
2. Ibid., p. 516.
3. Ibid., p. 74.
4. Dostoyevsky, *Notes d'hiver sur des impressions d'été*, in *Récits, Chroniques et polémiques*, La Pléiade, Gallimard, Paris, 1969, p. 1475.
5. Ibid., p. 1464.

c. The indictment of western civilisation

The institutions and basis of western civilisation did not find favour in Dostoyevsky's eyes. Liberty, equality and fraternity were supposed to be the basis of civilisation. But liberty was the liberty of those who possessed a million, the others were at the mercy of the rich. Equality before the law? It existed only in theory and not in practice. Dostoyevsky thought of equality not in legal terms but in spiritual terms. Thus Father Zossima in *The Brothers Karamazov* declares: "There is no equality save in spiritual dignity, and that is understood only by us."[1]

In *A Raw Youth*, Versilov, the champion of an aristocracy of the mind, accepts the equality of the rights of individuals but reveals the consequences, the triumph of individual selfishness: "All the experiments that have taken place everywhere [that is, in Europe] up to now show that equality of rights leads to a lessening of the sense of honour and hence of duty. Selfishness has replaced the old idea that kept the country together, and everything has dissolved in individual freedom."[2]

Fraternity, considered by western man to be "the great driving force of humanity", does not exist in reality. The fierce individualism of westerners and the opposition between oneself and others are an obstacle to all fraternity. The socialists seek to create fraternity from scratch on rational bases by describing the benefits that will accrue to everyone, but this rational, atheistic fraternity is a sham. The solidarity that exists in the west is but a solidarity of interests (the unions, the guilds, and so on).[3]

---

1. Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, La Pléiade, Gallimard, Paris, 1952, p. 368.
2. Dostoyevsky, *L'Adolescent*, La Pléiade, Gallimard, Paris, 1956, p. 236.
3. Dostoyevsky, *Notes d'hiver sur des impressions d'été*, in *Récits, Chroniques et polémiques*, La Pléiade, Gallimard, Paris, 1969, p. 1475.

While Dostoyevsky was struck by the poverty of the English workers whose loss of awareness was encouraged, he agreed that the western worker, particularly the French worker, was basically a property-owner:

"The workers too are all in their inmost being property-owners; their ideal can be summed up as being a property-owner (...) such is their nature (...) cultivated over the centuries."[1]

Dostoyevsky acknowledged that "freedom of conscience and conviction is the first freedom in the world", but did not take kindly to the unlimited submissiveness and toadying of the French press singing the praises of the Emperor. He had too easily forgotten the inordinate praise that he himself had showered on the Emperor Alexander II: "Our generous Tsar whose name will be for ever blessed by virtue of all that he has done for us,"[2] and the 1855 ode in which he had eulogized Nicholas I, and the finicky censorship to which he would be subjected throughout his life.

Dostoyevsky's description of the British Parliament in *The Idiot* is more favourable but remains superficial. Keller ironically speaks of the politeness with which the speakers address one another: "All these small turns of phrase, all this parliamentarianism of a free people, that is what enchants me."[3]

According to remarks heard by the hero of *A Raw Youth*, Versilov, that same British Parliament, going by present-day law, would have condemned Christ just as Pontius Pilate did.[4]

Dmitri Karamazov's lawyer paints a Utopian picture of the Russian people, embodying the ethical principle and the spirit of the law offering a contrast with other formalist peoples: "A

1 Dostoyevsky, *Notes d'hiver sur des impressions d'été*, in *Récits, Chroniques et polémiques*, La Pléiade, Gallimard, Paris, 1969, p. 1475.
2. Dostoyevsky, *The Diary of a Writer*, Gallimard, Paris, 1951, p. 21.
3. Dostoyevsky, *L'Idiot*, La Pléiade, Gallimard, Paris, 1951, p. 453.
4. Dostoyevsky, *L'Adolescent*, La Pléiade, Gallimard, Paris, 1956, p. 296.

Russian court does not exist for punishment only, but also for the salvation of a ruined man. Let other nations adhere to the letter of the law and exact punishment, we will adhere to its spirit and meaning – the salvation and regeneration of the lost."[1]

For Dostoyevsky, universal suffrage was but a "stupid invention."[2] The spiritual, Christian principle was constantly contrasted with the arid formalism of the west. If western civilisation was based on atheism and materialism, it could not serve as a model for an authentic European humanity. This was the perspective adopted by Dostoyevsky for considering France's glorious past before the Revolution.

In discussing the destinies of Europe, Dostoyevsky singles out France which he describes as a "nation of genius which has received the heritage of the ancient world and was for fifteen centuries at the head of the Latin nations of Europe. But the French Revolution severed the bond that united France to Catholicism. Will France return to the faith or will she propagate atheism throughout the world? This is a question of life and death for all of European humanity."[3]

Dostoyevsky did not think that the social problem could be solved simply by changing the political system, as was advocated by the Marxists. He analysed the situation of Europe. The historical evolution of humanity had never revealed any progress nor respect for law. The same principle had guided all change: "ôte-toi de là que je m'y mette" ("Get out from there so that I can take your place").[4] The lords had been supplanted by the bourgeoisie which had taken possession of their property. The proletariat which was becoming increasingly strong would, by the same principle, supplant the

1. Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, La Pléiade, Gallimard, Paris, 1952, p. 779.
2. Dostoyevsky, *Citizen*, n° 38 17 (29) September 1873.
3. Dostoyevsky, *The Diary of a Writer*, Gallimard, Paris, 1951, p. 229.
4. Ibid., p. 470.

bourgeoisie. Its goal was not sharing, but the possession of all power and property. The idealistic socialism of the Fourierists, who retained certain moral principles, had been replaced by the leaders of the proletariat who were interested only in fighting and for whom the end always justified the means. These ringleaders said to the bourgeois: "You are the hundred million heads destined for the slaughterhouse, and that's all there is to it. It's all over for you, in the best interests of humanity."[1] The reasons why the proletariat followed the ringleaders were "hope of plunder and the prospect of destruction and fighting." The leaders of the proletariat stated that "they have no need of fraternity, that Christianity is a nonsense and that humanity will in future be built on scientific bases."[2]

For Dostoyevsky the solution did not lie in political violence but in the affirmation of Christian principles: "the only Russian solution, and not only for us Russians but for the human race as a whole, is the moral significance of the question, or rather the Christian significance."[3] Dostoyevsky's political outlook can be understood only in the light of his philosophical and religious thinking. His condemnation of socialism and capitalism derived essentially from the atheism they professed, from the absence of God and of all the related values, and from their ignorance of the true nature of man.

2. Religious and philosophical ideas

a. Religious development

Dostoyevsky's philosophical and religious ideas are closely interlinked. We therefore need to consider his religious development in order to understand the basis of his Utopia.

---

1. Dostoyevsky, *The Diary of a Writer*, Gallimard, Paris, 1951, p. 471.
2. Ibid., p. 471.
3. Ibid., p. 472.

Brought up in the love of Christ, he was as an adolescent drawn towards Utopian socialism and became transformed into an atheist liberal European. But in so doing, he developed a split personality. He lived through this atheist period with a sense of tragedy. Later he was to consider the revolutionary years of his life to have been a denial of Christ and a sin against the people. When Belinsky called the very person of Christ in question, Dostoyevsky suffered. Belinsky wrote: "Whenever I thus treat Christ roughly, his whole face changes as though he were about to burst into tears."[1] But he was then a long way from the Russian clergy and the Russian Church. He applauded Belinsky who accused the Russian Church of defending despotism and inequality and of preventing the development of any sense of fraternity among men. But none of the works written before his period in the labour camp concerned the religious question.

It was only in the labour camp that Dostoyevsky discovered Christ and the people, as he confided to his brother in a letter dated 22 February 1854. The inmates of the camp he described as "a coarse, irritated and embittered lot" who took a vengeful pleasure in tormenting the gentry. But on Easter Monday 1850, he decided to stop despising his fellow convicts, recalling an episode from his childhood when a muzhik's kindness had helped him to overcome his fears. And among the convicts he went on to discover some admirable human beings: "What a pleasure it was to find gold under the rough cover".

At the same time as the people, he discovered Christ. His experience of penal servitude taught him the necessity of faith. "At such a time one thirsts for faith as the withered grass thirsts for water, and one actually finds it, because in misfortune the truth shines through."

---

1. Motchoulski C, *Dostoïevski*, Payot, Paris, p. 99.

Still, however, the antinomy remained: doubt and faith went hand in hand. He was a child of doubt and disbelief but he had formed within himself a symbol of faith:

"This symbol is very simple, and here is what it is: to believe that there is nothing more beautiful, more profound, more sympathetic, more reasonable, more courageous, and more perfect than Christ (...) If someone succeeded in proving to me that Christ was outside the truth, and if, indeed, the truth was outside Christ, I would sooner remain with Christ than with the truth."

This discovery was of decisive importance for Dostoyevsky's subsequent development. His attachment to the image of the Man-God was unwavering. It was "so sublime an idea of man that it is impossible not to believe that it is the ideal of humanity for the whole of eternity." Christ was "the sole example of a positively excellent person, to such an extent that the advent of that immensely, infinitely excellent person is surely an infinite miracle."

b. Dostoyevsky and Catholicism

For Dostoyevsky the gulf between the atheist, westernised elite and the ordinary people who were close to Christ demonstrated the moral superiority of the ordinary people. In addition, they embodied orthodoxy, wherein true Christianity was preserved.

Dostoyevsky accused western Catholicism of having compromised with temporal power, and of having lost the face of Christ. The ideas developed by Prince Myshkin in *The Idiot*[1] reproduce Dostoyevsky's entire line of reasoning in *The Diary of a Writer*.

Roman Catholicism did not hesitate to "sell Christ in exchange for mundane power". Having proclaimed the dogma that

1. Dostoyevsky, *The Idiot*, Gallimard, Paris, p. 471.

"Christianity cannot survive on earth without the earthly power of the Pope, it thereby has proclaimed a new Christ, not like the former one.[1] (...) This is the resurrection of the ancient Roman idea of world dominion and unity, which never did die in Roman Catholicism 'Know that I have ever considered myself potentate of the whole world and over all earthly kings, and not only their spiritual, but their mundane, genuine master, sovereign and emperor."[2]

Catholicism was now forming an alliance with the demos which was the rising historical force. Socialism was a direct continuation of Catholicism. The Pope proposed the establishment of the earthly paradise where everyone would become rich:

"He grants you His own permission to proclaim 'Be my brother or else death to you'. Should your brother refuse to share with you his property, half and half, take it all away from him, since Christ has long waited for his repentance, but now the time for wrath and vengeance has come."[3]

For Dostoyevsky, not only contemporary socialism but also the Roman Catholic Church had succumbed to the worship of earthly bread. He was convinced that the two ideologies would combine to form the kingdom of the Antichrist.

The hero of *The Idiot*, Prince Myshkin, states one day that Catholicism preaches the Antichrist and begets atheism and socialism. This idea is developed in *The Diary of a Writer*:

"Modern French socialism is but the most faithful and most direct continuation of the Catholic idea (...) for French socialism is nothing but the enforced unification of the human race – an idea already adumbrated in ancient Rome and preserved unchanged in Catholicism."[4]

---

1. Dostoyevsky, *The Diary of a Writer*, Gallimard, Paris, 1951, p. 310.
2. Ibid., p. 311.
3. Ibid., p. 312.
4. Ibid., p. 312.

The historical evolution of humanity was seen in religious terms by Dostoyevsky. Western civilisation had completed its evolution when it had proclaimed man to be without God. Was the same evolution going to be produced in Russia? Did civilisation unfailingly entail the development of atheism or, as exemplified by Ivan Karamazov, was it possible to be a believer when one was civilised? The view of the future of Russia and of the world was steeped in a Messianic and religious Utopianism.

c. Dostoyevsky and the Russian idea

In Dostoyevsky's novels conflicting voices ring out. The disparagers of Russia, regarded as a mere parasite of Europe, clash with convinced nationalists.

But in his capacity as a journalist, Dostoyevsky took sides. When the journal *Time* first came out in 1861, Dostoyevsky developed his theory of rootedness, his faith in the people as the bearer of truth, and his rationalist and orthodox Messianism. But that theory grew increasingly unshakeable. Two western universal ideas were doomed to failure: the Catholic idea which had impregnated many nations, and the Protestant idea which, according to Dostoevsky, was purely negative and would disappear in the wake of Catholicism. A third universal idea shone forth in the east: the Slav idea which held the answer to the question of the destiny of the European people and nations.

Russia had learned from Europe, then had returned to the homeland and brought the news to the world:

"Civilisation is for us a completed episode: we have fully tried it out after taking from it what suited us (...) and freely we return to the motherland..."[1]

1. Dostoyevsky, *The Diary of a Writer*, Gallimard, Paris, 1951, p. 20.

"The cycle of European civilisation is historically completed; another is beginning and, even more importantly, it is in our country that there has been a premonition of it."[1]

Russia would open her arms to civilisation which would light the way to her own destiny:

"With time the Russian idea will embrace all the ideas that Europe has been developing for so long and with such doggedness within its individual nations."[2]

d. Freedom and personality in Dostoyevsky

Fraternity and love of one's fellows must be the guiding principles of the Russian idea. These, however, cannot exist without freedom. Dostoyevsky came to understand this during his stay in the labour camp. A lack of freedom meant a lack of fraternity:

"Among the prisoners there was no perceptible feeling of friendship, I don't mean among them generally, which is understandable, but even from one individual to another, and I never saw a convict become another's friend... This is a remarkable feature and is not found among free people."[3]

One of the basic philosophical problems that runs through Dostoyevsky's entire work is the problem of personality and freedom, indissolubly linked to the ethical problem of good and evil. To understand the essence of man, Dostoyevsky looked beyond his conscious mind and his reason and plumbed the depths where man is truly himself. The man from underground thus discovers, contrary to the rationalism of the Russian or western progressives, that the essence of man lies not in reason but in freedom, in absolute freedom outside good and evil. Man is an irrational being who rejects

1. Dostoyevsky, *The Diary of a Writer*, Gallimard, Paris, 1951, p. 21.
2. Ibid., p. 22.
3. Dostoyevsky, *The House of the Dead*, quoted by Motchoulski, p. 157.

scientific determinism or ideal determinism. His free choice shows that he can desire evil and destruction as much as what is good.

But the man from underground is a loner, cut off from the society of men. The antinomy of Dostovesky's thought is seen here: he fervently defends the principle of personality, but at the same time he denounces the completely self-absorbed man from underground. This ties in with his criticism of western individualism which makes society into a mechanical agglomerate of castes in competition with one another, but without organic link and without any real fraternity.

Freedom is not understood by Dostoyevsky in the western sense of the term, which gives it a formal, legal framework along with guarantees that make it possible. It is considered in a more metaphysical and more religious sense. Christ chose to allow man his freedom, and hence moral responsibility for choosing good or evil. Dostoyevsky attacks the theory subscribed to by the socialists who thought that the individual's social circumstances alone determined whether or he not he committed an evil act or a crime. Such a justification of crime was an insult to man's fundamental freedom. The effects of extreme freedom were analysed by way of a number of heroes (the man from underground, Raskolnikov, Stavrogin). They bear within themselves the seeds of death, the absence of "living life". For Dostoyevsky the ultimate truth of man is not freedom but the ethical principle. His ethic is a mystical one. A living sense of God is alone what causes one to choose the good. Atheistic humanitarianism was to be combated because to desire the good of humanity without believing in God could only lead to despotism.

Dostoyevsky's thinking is imbued with a religious Utopianism which seeks to reconcile the principle of personality with that of true fraternity. Russia could in his view reveal to the west a higher degree of freedom and greater personal fulfilment

and solve the eternal problem of the opposition between the individual and society.

Dostoyevsky took over certain Slavophile ideas. The highest development of the personality lies in "sacrificing oneself completely of one's own free will for the benefit of all (...) without being compelled to do so by anyone".[1]

He also developed certain Utopian ideas. Society would say in turn: "Receive then from us everything too. We shall seek with all our strength to ensure that you enjoy the greatest possible degree of personal freedom, the highest possible degree of self-fulfilment."[2]

1. Dostoyevsky, *Notes d'hiver sur des impressions d'été*, in *Récits, Chroniques et polémiques*, La Pléiade, Gallimard, Paris, 1969, p. 1477-1478.
2. Ibid., p. 1479.

Dostoyevsky's contribution to European culture

Dostoyevsky's works have triggered passions and have been interpreted in a variety of sometimes contradictory ways. His influence may have varied from one period and country to another, but it has always been profound, both in the field of literature and in the realm of psychology and ideas.

1. The polyphonic novel

Dostoyevsky revolutionised the art of the novel. He was seen as the master of the modern novel. What appears to westerners to be the bewildering complexity of his novels, far from being due to the informal character of his art, as was suggested by some critics when the earliest translations of his works began to appear, draws its justification and unity from the author's design. He set out to show flesh-and-blood characters, swept along by a raging passion that would embody the great philosophical, religious, metaphysical and ideological questions of his time.

Bakhtin considers the unity of Dostoyevsky's novels to lie in their polyphony. The creator of a new genre, which the Russian critic labelled metaphorically the polyphonic novel, Dostoyevsky destroyed the traditional form of the European novel, which was essentially that of a monologue.

The writer was no longer the omniscient demiurge exemplified by Tolstoy or Balzac. His conception of the inner man and of literary character was completely new. The author was no more than a participant in a world where fully autonomous consciences co-existed and acted upon one another in a context of dialogue.

Dostoyevsky, who in this respect was very modern, introduced doubt and ambiguity into the universe of the novel. "The Age of Suspicion" (*L'ère du soupçon*), as Nathalie

Sarraute called it, began with the Russian writer and continued into the twentieth-century with Henry James, Conrad, Joyce, Proust, Kafka and Virginia Woolf. The writer no longer describes reality but asks himself questions about it, and the author's actual words are subject to doubt.

Dostoyevsky broke with the Balzacian tradition of clear, precise, almost scientific narration, shaped in the positivist school of Auguste Comte and Claude Bernard. The structure of his novels is based on an intuitive, irrational vision of the world which prefigures Nietzsche, Bergson, Freud or Einstein. Leitmotifs, parallel episodes, contrasting themes and scenes and free associations replace the strict causality of motives and acts. This principle of thematic composition was to be used in literature by Thomas Mann, Virginia Woolf and Aldous Huxley and further developed by Faulkner.

The role played in Dostoyevsky's narrative technique by interior monologue or confession attests to the primacy of the subjective, inward world over external descriptions of reality. The authentic reality of the human soul can only be expressed in the hero's own words about himself and in his own self-awareness when faced with other minds. The German expressionists tried to imitate this technique (Kornfeld, Werfel in *The man in the mirror*).

In the interior monologue Dostoevsky, the precursor of Bergson, replaces the chronological time characteristic of the traditional novel by an experiential, subjective time, as reflected in the hero's mind.

The expressionists felt a kinship with Dostoyevsky in his treatment of space. A symbolic relationship exists between the labyrinth of the modern mind with its doubts, existential anguish and "sound and fury" and the big modern city. Alleyways, narrow staircases and dimly lit rooms are so many symbolic places where passions come face to face.

2. "Dostoyevsky is the only man who has taught me anything about psychology" (Nietzsche)

On reading Dostoyevsky's novels, westerners had the impression that they were discovering the darkest recesses of the Russian soul. In fact, the writer was exploring the human mind in general, making, before Freud, immense discoveries in the sphere of individual psychology and rehabilitating in western thinking the idea of the irrational.

Logic and clarity pale before the triumph of underground psychology. The giddy descent into the world of the subconscious reveals to Europeans the insoluble contradictions and complexity of human nature. Dostoyevsky introduces ambiguity at the heart of underground psychology. The boundaries between love and hate, pride and humility, revolt and submission, suffering and pleasure become blurred and bear witness to the fundamental duality of human nature. This complexity of the human subconscious on the verge of pathology is also bodied forth in the novels of one the most European of Italian novelists, Italo Svevo (*The Confessions of Zeno*), and in the works of the Norwegian writer Knut Hamsun (*Hunger*).

Unlike the traditional hero of the European novel, firmly anchored in the social landscape, the Dostoyevskan character lives on the sidelines of society. His soul is laid bare, stripped of its social attributes and confronted with others in scenes of tremendous dramatic tension. It is thus gradually revealed to itself and to the reader.

This highly modern feature of Dostoyevsky's art, whose conflicting protagonists have an incomplete, open character and in which the last word about the hero remains unsaid, is reminiscent of D.H. Lawrence's art in *Women in Love* (1920).

Uprooted, often on the brink of madness and of the abyss, Dostoyevsky's heroes reveal the darker side of the human soul. This aspect of his work inspired a number of European

writers, including Thomas Mann in *Buddenbrooks* (1901), *The Magic Mountain* (1924) and *Doctor Faustus* (1947), the Polish writer Mark Hlasko, the idol of the younger generation of 1956, the Swiss novelist R. Walser and the Catalan writer Joan Puig i Ferreter.

The eastern Christian idea of redemption through suffering was introduced by Dostoyevsky into the world of western literature. Often regarded as the apostle of a religion of suffering, the Russian writer is directly echoed in the work of Faulkner (*Requiem for a Nun*, 1951), Tozzi (*The Three Crosses*, 1920) and Walser. The theme of pity for the humble and the disinherited inspired the Austrian poet R.M. Rilke in his autobiographical novel *The Notebook of Malte Laurids Brigge* (1910), as well as H. Fallada and Pirandello (*Novelle per un anno*).

3. "If God does not exist, all is permitted"

The importance of Dostoyevsky's work extends far beyond the fields of literature and psychology. The writer steps outside the traditional framework of the novel in order to probe the human condition as a whole. For this reason his novels have aroused the interest of novelists, but also of philosophers, political theoreticians, Christian writers and moralists.

"Marx was long thought to be the prophet of the twentieth-century (...) And we discover that the true prophet was Dostoyevsky", said Camus. A prophet of revolutions and dictatorships that were to set their bloody hallmark on the history of the 20th century, Dostoyevsky sought the roots of totalitarianism in man himself. He traced the line leading from the fanatical revolutionary Nechaev, the prototype of the hero of *The Devils*, to the Stalinist concentration camps. Madness has caught up with reality, justifying Dostoyevsky's use of the fantastic to capture the essence of life.

The writer's apocalyptic vision, his analysis of the workings of totalitarianism and the consequences of nihilism have fascinated twentieth-century thinkers, in particular the French "new philosophers", who in 1978 claimed Dostoyevsky for their own. The many adaptations of his novels for the European stage, especially *The Devils*, illustrate the writer's relevance to the contemporary intellectual debate (Diego Fabbri adapted *The Devils* in Italy in 1947-1957, Camus in France in 1959 and Janusz Warminski and Andzrej Wajda in Poland).

What he has to say about ideology carries metaphysical and spiritual overtones and, more broadly, poses a problem that tormented Dostoyevsky throughout his life, namely the existence of evil on earth. He was fascinated by the theme of crime and wrong-doing and by criminal psychology. His novel *Crime and Punishment* was imitated throughout Europe (for instance by D'Annunzio in *L'innocente* (1891), Capanua in *Il marchese di Roccaverdina* (1901), Deledda in *Un'aberrazione* (1901), Ramon Del Valle Inclan in *El Ruedo Iberico* and L. Frank in *Die Ursache* (1916)).

The criminal transgresses social or moral laws, raises himself above the "herd" and lives out his own freedom. The theme that has proved so fruitful in twentieth-century literature of the *acte gratuit* already appears in embryo in that novel. It is to be seen again in Sartre, Camus, Beckett and the work of the Belgian author Johan Daisne (*L'homme au crâne rasé*, 1948).

Dostoyevsky denounced the crisis of values affecting contemporary society and anticipated the tragedy besetting a humanity without God. The revolt of the "superman" against ordinary morality plunges him into solitude. He cuts himself off from other men and denies God. Ivan Karamazov's famous formula "If God does not exist, all is permitted" is at the origin of modern existentialism.

The major questions concerning faith and doubt, good and evil, mind and body, awakened deep echoes in Spanish and Portuguese literature, more perhaps than in any other European literature (in particular in the Spanish writer Miguel de Unamuno) and in the Christian French writers Bernanos and Claudel.

In his writings Dostoyevsky expressed the existential anguish of modern man in a world where declining religious values are leaving the field free for the great inquisitors and the high-and-mighty who, behind a false humanism, harbour an endless thirst for power.

Conclusion

Never has a writer so deeply attached to his native land been at the same time as universal as Dostoyevsky. He made an enormous contribution to intellectual history with his ideas concerning the philosophy of the mind. He explored the themes of man, morality, history and religion with a rare penetration. His analysis of human nature wherein he discovers a tragic combat between good and evil make Dostoyevsky the equal of Dante, Goethe or Shakespeare. Long before Freud or Jung, he looked beyond the conscious mind and pierced the mystery of man.

His comments on history are as relevant as ever. He bears witness to the crisis affecting the civilisation of his time, a crisis which was moral and, more than anything else, religious and was just as real in Russia as in Europe. Being more "civilised", Europe slipped more quickly into atheism. And this brings us to the heart of the problem: can one be civilised and at the same time retain one's faith? Dostoyevsky assumes the prophet's role. Separated from God, men worshipped the golden calf. What then will become of a world without spirituality, without any aspiration towards goodness? Speaking of France, which was in the vanguard of European Catholicism, he singles out the question of faith as the essential question for the survival of humanity.

Dostoyevsky foresaw the advent of a totalitarian pagan state: "The world will not be saved until it has been visited by the Spirit of Evil (...) And the Spirit of Evil is near: perhaps it will be seen by our children."

Dostoyevsky brought back the sense of tragedy which had vanished from nineteenth-century literature. In his great modern tragedies he shows the historical process as a struggle between the aspiration towards unity and degeneration into a

diabolic fragmentation, between, on the one hand, unifying love and, on the other, not hate but the lust for power.

The tragedy of contemporary consciousness, of arrogant solitude and of man as God who has replaced God as man (Christ) continued to torment Dostoyevsky. A precursor of Nietzsche and his theory of the superman, Dostoyevsky reveals an affinity with the German philosopher and with Kierkegaard in the revolt against the laws of reason.

His thoughts about the major problems of nineteenth-century society and the future of humanity are not such as to leave the mind of a European untroubled. Can the antinomy between freedom and justice, between the end and the means, be resolved so as to create a humanity that is happier but also freer?

Through this quest for a spiritual principle, through his longing for justice but also for freedom and through his aspiration towards the ideal, which will not allow itself to be thrown off course by despotism, that Dostoyevsky joins the ranks of the greatest European thinkers.

And so we can say, as Dostoyevsky himself said in his speech on Pushkin: "Yes, the Russian's destiny is incontestably all-European and universal."

Working texts

Text No. 1

*The heroine of Dickens' novel (*The Old Curiosity Shop*), Nell, a 13-year-old girl, worn out by sickness after a headlong flight across England to escape a hateful creditor, finds haven with her grandfather in a cottage by a country church where she goes and meditates on life and death.*

The child sat down in this old, silent place, among the stark figures on the tombs – they made it more quiet there, than elsewhere, to her fancy – and gazing round with a feeling of awe, tempered with a calm delight, felt that now she was happy, and at rest. She took a Bible from the shelf, and read; then laying it down, thought of the summer days and the bright spring-time that would come – of the rays of sun that would fall in aslant upon the sleeping forms – of the leaves that would flutter at the window, and play in glistening shadows on the pavement – of the songs of birds, and growth of buds and blossoms out of doors – of the sweet air, that would steal in and gently wave the tattered banners overhead. What if the spot awakened thoughts of death! Die who would, it would still remain the same; these sights and sounds would still go on as happily as ever. It would be no pain to sleep amidst them.

She left the chapel – very slowly and often turning back to gaze again – and coming to a low door, which plainly led into the tower, opened it, and climbed the winding stair in darkness; save where she looked down through narrow loopholes on the place she had left, or caught a glimmering vision of the dusty bells. At length she gained the end of the ascent and stood upon the turret top.

Oh! the glory of the sudden burst of light; the freshness of the fields and woods, stretching away on every side and meeting the bright blue sky; the cattle grazing in the pasturage; the smoke, that, coming from among the trees,

seemed to rise upward from the green earth; the children yet at their gambols down below – all, everything, so beautiful and happy. It was like passing from death to life; it was drawing nearer Heaven.

Charles Dickens, *The Old Curiosity Shop*,
Penguin Classics, 1985, pp. 494-495.

50

Text No. 2

Trichatov, in a drunken state, recounts his dreams to the young Arkady Dolgorouky, the hero of A Raw Youth. *After touching on the theme of Faust and imagining a scene in which Faust's Marguerite is confronted with the Devil who curses her, he calls to mind the passage from Dickens.*

You remember that passage near the end where the two of them, the crazy old man and the sweet 13-year-old, his grand-daughter, find haven, after their fantastic flight and wanderings, somewhere in the depths of England close by an old Gothic cathedral, and the girl obtains a position showing the cathedral to visitors. One day when the sun is setting, the girl, standing in the forecourt of the cathedral, bathed in its dying rays, watches the sun go down, plunged in a mood of gentle, thoughtful contemplation in her child's soul, in her astonished soul, as though she found herself face to face with a mystery, for are they not both mysteries, the sun which emanates from God and the cathedral which emanates from man? Is it not so?... Oh, I don't express myself very well, but God loves these first thoughts of children... And there, close by her, on the steps, that crazy old man, her grandfather, looking at her with his fixed gaze... You know, there's nothing extraordinary there, in that scene from Dickens, but you'll never be able to forget it, and it has remained engraved on people's minds all through Europe. Why? That's where beauty lies! Because this is innocence! Oh, I can't say what it is, just that it's beautiful. At school, I would always be reading novels. You know, I have a sister in the countryside, just one year older than me... Now, everything's been sold down there, and we no longer have any countryside! There we were together on the veranda, under our old lime trees, reading that novel, and the sun was setting too. Suddenly we stopped reading and we said to one another that we too would be good, we too would be beautiful... I was then

51

preparing to go to university... You see, Dolgoruky, everyone has his memories!...

And all at once he leaned his pretty head upon my shoulder and burst into tears. I felt sorry, very sorry, for him. I guess that he had drunk a lot of wine, but he spoke to me so sincerely, so fraternally, with so much feeling...

Dostyevsky, *A Raw Youth*.

Questions

- What changes does Dostoyevsky make to Dickens' text?
- Analyse the character of Trichatov as he appears in the text.
- The symbolism of the sun in the psychological and pictorial spheres.

52

Text No. 3

Stepan Trofimovich Verkhovensky, one of the heroes of The Devils, *is a representative of the idealistic generation of the 1840s. He speaks at a fête in order to defend art against the attacks of the young positivist and utilitarian generation of the 1860s.*

The young teacher was particularly excited, for, having once plucked up courage to speak, he could no longer stop himself.

'Ladies and gentlemen, my last word in this business is universal forgiveness. I, an old man who expects nothing from life, I solemnly declare that the spirit of life still breathes in us, and that the younger generation has not yet lost its living strength. The enthusiasm of our modern youth is as bright and pure as it was in our time. Only one thing has happened: a shift of aims, the substitution of one beauty for another! The whole misunderstanding has arisen only round the question what is more beautiful: Shakespeare or a pair of boots, Raphael or petroleum!'

'Informer!' cried some.

'Compromising questions!'

'Agent provocateur!'

'And I maintain,' Mr Verkhovensky squealed, beside himself with excitement, 'and I maintain that Shakespeare and Raphael are higher than the emancipation of the serfs, higher than nationalism, higher than socialism, higher than the younger generation, higher than chemistry, higher even than almost all humanity, for they are the fruit of all mankind, and perhaps the highest fruition that can possibly exist. A form of beauty already attained, but for the attaining of which I should perhaps not consent to live. Oh, Lord,' he cried, throwing up his hands, 'ten years ago I said the same thing from the platform in Petersburg, in exactly the same words,

and they did not understand it in exactly the same way, they laughed and booed as now; you little men, what is it you lack still, that you don't understand? Why, do you realise, do you realise that mankind can get along without the Englishman, without Germany, too, and most certainly without the Russians – it can get on without science, without bread, but without beauty it cannot carry on, for then there will be nothing more to do in the world! The whole mystery is there, the whole of history is there! Even science could not exist a moment without beauty – do you know that, you who are laughing at me? It will sink into dark ignorance – you won't invent a nail even! I shan't give in!' he shouted idiotically in conclusion, and banged his fist on the table with all his might.

Dostoyevsky, *The Devils*,
Penguin Classics, 1953, pp. 483-484

Questions

- What do you think of Stepan Trofimovich's conception of art?
- What does the text tell you about the younger generation's attitude towards the great artists?
- What is the role of art in contemporary society and what role should it play, in your opinion? Give examples.

54

Text No. 4

One of the three brothers Karamazov, Ivan, an atheist intellectual, torn between faith and doubt, tells his brother, the pure and saintly Alyosha, of a story he has imagined, the legend of the Great Inquisitor, in which he makes an indictment of Christ. The action is set in 16th-century Spain, during the most terrible period of the Inquisition: Christ has descended on Earth and has met the Great Inquisitor, who questions him.

'The terrible and wise spirit, the spirit of self-destruction and non-existence,' the old man went on, 'the great spirit talked with you in the wilderness and we are told in the books that he apparently 'tempted' you. Is that so? And could anything truer have been said than what he revealed to you in these three questions and what you rejected and what in the books are called 'temptations'? [...]'

'Decide yourself who was right – you or he who questioned you then? Call to your mind the first question; its meaning, though not in these words, was this: You want to go into the world and you are going empty-handed, with some promise of freedom, which men in their simplicity and their innate lawlessness cannot even comprehend, which they fear and dread for nothing has ever been more unendurable to man and to human society than freedom! And do you see the stones in this parched and barren desert? Turn them into loaves, and mankind will run after you like a flock of sheep, grateful and obedient, though for ever trembling with fear that you might withdraw your hand and they would no longer have your loaves.'

'But you did not want to deprive man of freedom and rejected the offer, for, you thought, what sort of freedom is it if obedience is bought with loaves of bread? You replied that man does not live by bread alone, but do you know that for

the sake of that earthly bread the spirit of the earth will rise up against you and will join battle with you and conquer you, and all will follow him, crying 'Who is like this beast? He has given us fire from heaven!' Do you know that ages will pass and mankind will proclaim in its wisdom and science that there is no crime and, therefore, no sin, but that there are only hungry people. 'Feed them first and then demand virtue of them!' – that is what they will inscribe on their banner which they will raise against you and which will destroy your temple. A new building will rise where your temple stood, the dreadful Tower of Babel will rise up again, and though, like the first one, it will not be completed, yet you might have prevented the new tower and have shortened the sufferings of men by a thousand years – for it is to us that they will come at last, after breaking their hearts for a thousand years with their tower! Then they will look for us again under the ground, hidden in the catacombs (for we shall again be persecuted and tortured), and they will find us and cry out to us, 'Feed us, for those who have promised us fire from heaven have not given it to us!' And then we shall finish building their tower, for he who feeds them will complete it, and we alone shall feed them in your name, and we shall lie to them that it is in your name. Oh, without us they will never, never feed themselves. No science will give them bread so long as they remain free. But in the end they will lay their freedom at our feet and say to us, 'We don't mind being your slaves so long as you feed us!' They will, at last, realise themselves that there cannot be enough freedom and bread for everybody, for they will never, never be able to let everyone have his fair share!'

Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*,
Penguin Classics, 1958, pp. 295-297.

56

Questions

- What was the first temptation?
- What is the Great Inquisitor's conception of man and how does it differ from that of Christ?
- Analyse the Great Inquisitor's argument.

Text No. 5

The hero of Notes from Underground, *an irritable, sickly, solitary and mean-minded character, whom his superior intelligence has made over-aware and hence, in his own words, incapable of action, goes one evening into a disreputable tavern in order to provoke a quarrel and with the secret hope that he will be thrown out of the window, as in the scene he has just witnessed.*

'I could have forgiven him for striking me, but I couldn't forgive that moving me from place to place without even seeing me (...) I had been treated like an insect (...) I had a quarrel on my hands (...) But I thought better of it and preferred ...to stay resentfully sulking in the background (...) Don't imagine that I had slunk away from that officer because of cowardice, though; I was never a coward at heart, although I constantly acted like one, but – don't laugh yet, I can explain it; I can explain everything, you may be sure (...) It was not cowardice that made me shrink, but infinite vanity (...) I really had no lack of physical courage, but I had not enough moral courage (...) Sometimes my rage positively choked me. Finally I made up my mind to challenge my enemy to a duel. I composed a really beautiful and charming letter to him, begging him to apologise (...) But thank God (...), I didn't send my letter (...) And then suddenly (...) I was struck by a brilliant idea (...) 'What,' I thought, 'if I were to meet him and ... not step aside? (...) I shan't exactly jostle him (...) but just ... not get out of his way, brush against him, not painfully, but just shoulder to shoulder, exactly as is laid down by the conventions...'

Dostoyevsky, *Notes from Underground*,
Penguin Classics, 1972, pp. 52-56.

Text No. 6

Clamence, the hero of The Fall, *a brilliant and renowned lawyer, recounts an incident that deeply scarred him. Involved in a quarrel between car drivers, he was struck by a motorcyclist and insulted by a passer-by.*

'Hardly had I set foot on the road when, from among the crowd that started to gather, a man came running out towards me and told me in no uncertain terms that I was the lowest of the low and that he would not allow me to hit a man who had a motorbike between his legs and who was consequently at a disadvantage. I turned round to face this musketeer and, to tell the truth, I didn't even see him. For scarcely had I turned my head when, at almost exactly the same moment I heard the motorbike revving up and I received a violent bang on the ear. Before I had time to realise what had happened, the motorbike went off. Absent-mindedly, I walked mechanically towards d'Artagnan when, at the same time, an infuriated chorus of car horns rose up from the long line of traffic that had now formed. The lights turned green. Then, still a bit stunned, instead of giving a good shaking to the idiot who had challenged me, I went meekly back to my car and drove off, with the idiot shouting after me 'What a jerk'. I still smart from it.

An incident of no importance, you'll say. No doubt. It's just that it took me a long time to forget it, that's what's important. And yet I had an excuse. I had allowed myself to be struck without retaliating, but I could not be accused of cowardice. Taken by surprise, provoked on two sides, I had mixed everything up and the car horns had added to my confusion. Yet I felt as wretched about it as if I had behaved dishonourably. In my mind's eye I saw myself failing to react beneath the ironic gaze of a crowd all the more delighted by the fact that, as I remember, I was sporting a very elegant

blue suit. I could hear myself being called a jerk, and for all that, it seemed justified. I had in fact publicly lost face. As a result of a combination of circumstances, it is true, but there are always circumstances. Afterwards, I clearly saw what I should have done. I saw myself taking d'Artagnan down a peg or two, getting back into my car, chasing after the louse who had hit me, catching up with him, blocking his bike against a pavement, taking him aside and giving him the thrashing that he had largely deserved. With a few variations, I projected this little film in my imagination a hundred times. But it was too late, and for some days I was eaten up by a horrible feeling of resentment.'

Camus, *La chute*,
Paris, Gallimard, La Pléiade, 1962, p. 1502.

Questions

- What is the parallel between the two incidents in Text No. 5 and Text No. 6?
- What are the differences?
- What do the two episodes as recounted tell us about the characters of the protagonists?
- Consciousness of the "self" and the external world.

Tables

Year	Dostoyevsky's life and works	Cultural and artistic life in Russia
1821	Birth of Fyodor Mikhaylovich Dostoyevsky in Moscow	
1822	Birth of Dostoyevsky's sister Barbara	
1823		**23-25**: Almanack: *"Mnemosyne"*, brought out by the young idealists who introduce into Russia the Goethe cult and the metaphysics of Schelling
1824		
1825	Birth of Dostoyevsky's brother Andrei	Pushkin: *Boris Godunov*
1826		Lobachevsky announces the first non-Euclidean geometry

Political and social events in Russia	Cultural and artistic life in Europe	Political and social events in Europe
Secret Northern and Southern societies	**20-25 Romanticism in literature and art; Byron, Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Vigny, Musset, Nerval, Heine, Turner, Friedrich, Delacroix, Géricault** Fourier: *Traité de l'harmonie universelle* Hegel: *The Philosophy of Right*	**21-29** War of independence in Greece
	Hugo: *Odes* Stendhal: *De l'Amour* De Quincey: *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*	
	Thiers: *History of the Revolution (I and II)* Stendhal: *Racine et Shakespeare*	War in Spain (Trocadero)
	Hugo: *Odes et Ballades* A Compte: *Système de philosophie positive* Byron: *Don Juan*	Death of Louis XVIII
Death of Alexander I. Crushing of the revolt of the Decembrists, a group of young noble officers wishing to impose a constitution on the Tsar. Accession of Nicholas I	Lamartine: *Dernier chant du pélerinage d'Harold* Saint-Simon: *Le nouveau christianisme*	Coronation of Charles X
	Hölderin: *Gedichte* (poems)	

Year	Dostoyevsky's life and works	Cultural and artistic life in Russia
1827		
1829	Birth of Dostoyevsky's twin sisters. Only Vera survives	
1830		Pushkin : *Mozart and Salieri, The Stone Guest, The Covetous Knight*
1831	Episode of the Muzhik Marei (*Diary of a Writer*) Birth of Dostoyevsky's brother, Nikolai	Pushkin : *Boris Godunov* **31-32** Gogol : *Evenings on a farm near Dikenka*
1832	The Dostoyevskys buy the village of Chermachnia in the province of Tula	
1833	Dostoyevsky and his brother Mikhail are enrolled in the educational estabishment of Mr Drachussov (Souchard, of French origin)	Pushkin : *The Bronze Horseman, The Queen of Spades*
1834	Dostoyevsky and his brother Mikhail are enrolled in the Chermak boarding school in Moscow	Gogol : *The Nose*

	Political and social events in Russia	Cultural and artistic life in Europe	Political and social events in Europe
		Hugo: *Cromwell* and *Préface* Mickiewicz: *Konrad Wallenrod* Goethe: *Wilhelm Meister's Travel* Hugo: *Les Orientales* and *Le Dernier jour d'un condamné* Fourier: *Le Nouveau monde industriel*	
	30-32: Polish uprising Nicholas I abolishes the Polish Constitution and russifies the administration	The *"Bataille d'Hernani"* **30-42** Comte: *Cours de philosophie positive* **30-48** Balzac: *La Comédie humaine* Stendhal: *Le Rouge et le Noir* Goethe: *Faust II* Delacroix: *Freedom guiding the people* Lamartine: *Ode sur les révolutions* G. Sand: *Indians*	Revolutionary movements in France, Germany, Poland and Italy: independence of Belgium and autonomy of Serbia
	Complete Collection of the Laws (Speransky)	Balzac: *Le Père Goriot* Lamennais: *Paroles d'un croyant* (condemned by Rome) Musset: *Lorenzaccio*	Establishment of the Customs Union of the Germanic Countries

Year	Dostoyevsky's life and works	Cultural and artistic life in Russia
1835	Birth of Dostoyevsky's sister Aleksandra	Gogol : *The Diary of a Madman*, *The Nevsky Prospect*
1836		Gogol : *The Government Inspector* Pushkin : *The Captain's Daughter*
1837	Death of Dostoyevsky's mother	Death of Pushkin, killed in a duel by Baron de Dantès
1838	Dostoyevsky is enrolled in the Saint Petersburg Academy of Military Engineering	
1839	His father is murdered by his serfs	Lermontov : *Demon*
1840	Dostoyevsky is made an officer. He reads a great deal : Balzac, Schiller, Hugo, Shakespeare, Racine and Goethe	Lermontov : *A Hero of our Time* Belinsky imposes realism as the only acceptable literary style
1841	Dostoyevsky writes two plays which he does not complete : *Mary Stuart* and *Boris Godunov*	**41-42** Gogol : *The Portrait* **41-46** Herzen : *Who is Guilty ?*

68

Political and social events in Russia	Cultural and artistic life in Europe	Political and social events in Europe
House arrest of Jews in the borderlands of the Empire	**35-40** : Tocqueville : *De la Démocratie en Amérique* Andersen : *Tales*	
Chaadayev's philosophical letter claiming that Russia has made no contribution to civilisation	Eckermann : *Conversations with Goethe* Dickens : *Pickwick Papers*	
	Balzac : *Les illusions perdues* Dickens : *Oliver Twist*	**1837-1901** : Reign of Queen Victoria of England
First railway	E. Poe : *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* Berlioz : *Benvenuto Cellini* Hugo : *Ruy Blas*	
Joining of the Polish Uniate and Orthodox churches	Stendhal : *La Chartreuse de Parme*	
London Convention : Law authorising the emancipation of the serfs	E. Poe : *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque* Proudhon : *Qu'est-ce que la propriété ?* Becker : *Hymn to the Rhine* Mérimée : *Colomba*	
	Feuerbach : *The Essence of Christianity* Chateaubriand : *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe* Michelet : *Jeanne d'Arc* Töpffer : *Nouvelles genevoises* Lamartine : *La Marseillaise de la paix*	

Year	Dostoyevsky's life and works	Cultural and artistic life in Russia
1842		Gogol : *The Overcoat, Dead Souls* Vogue enjoyed by the novels of Walter Scott, Dickens, Balzac and Sand
1843	Dostoyevsky is assigned to the design office of the Engineering Department. He translates Balzac's *Eugénie Grandet*	
1844	Dostoyevsky resigns in order to devote himself to writing	
1845		**45-54**: Annexation of the whole of Kazakhstan
1846	Dostoyevsky publishes *Poor Folk, The Double* and *Mr Prokhartchin* Introduced during a party at the Wielgorskys' to the celebrated beauty Seniavinia, he faints. Dostoyevsky makes the acquaintance of Petrashevsky	
1847	He frequents the Utopian Socialists circle He publishes *The Landlady*	Goncharov : *A Common Story* **47-52** Turgenev : *A Hunter's Sketches*

	Political and social events in Russia	Cultural and artistic life in Europe	Political and social events in Europe
		E. Sue : *Les mystères de Paris* G. Sand : *Consuelo* A. Bertrand : *Gaspard de la nuit*	
		Balzac : *Les illusions perdues* (end) E. Poe : *The Gold Bug* Kierkegaard : *Either/Or*	
		Dumas : *Les Trois mousquetaires, Le Comte de Monte-Cristo* Heine : *Deutschland*	
		Karl Marx : *The Holy Family* Mérimée : *Carmen* Engels : *The Condition of the Working Class in England*	Famine in Ireland : development of emigration to the United States
		Proudhon : *La philosophie de la misère* Michelet : *Le Peuple* G. Sand : *La Mare au diable*	Gradual introduction of free trade in England Crisis in Europe, disturbances in Paris
		47-53 Michelet : *Histoire de la Révolution française* Thackeray : *Vanity Fair* Emilie Brontë : *Wuthering Heights* Marx : *The Poverty of Philosophy*	

Year	Dostoyevsky's life and works	Cultural and artistic life in Russia
1848	He publishes *White Nights* and *The Jealous Husband* He leads a busy social life. Financial difficulties. December: At the Petrashevskys' he attends a lecture on Fourierism and Communism	
1849	Dostoyevsky is arrested along with other members of the Petrashevsky circle and sentenced to death. Sham execution. Sentenced to hard labour	
1850	Arrives at the Omsk penal camp in Siberia. Visit by three wives of Decembrists who leave him a Bible	Turgenev: *A month in the Country*
1851		
1852		**52-54** Tolstoy: *Childhood and Youth* **52-68** Herzen: *My Past and Thoughts*

	Political and social events in Russia	Cultural and artistic life in Europe	Political and social events in Europe
	Belensky dies After the revolutions in Europe a series of police measures restrict freedom of the press (censorship, prohibition of travel abroad and the teaching of philosophy)	Marx and Engels: *The Communist Manifesto* John Stuart Mill: *Principles of Political Economy*	Revolutionary movements in Europe; Second Republic in France
	Intervention in Austria Hungary and Poland Petrashevsky affair	Death of Chopin; **peak of romantic music: Berlioz, Liszt, Schubert, Schumann, Wagner, Brahms** Kierkegaard: *The Sickness unto Death* Dickens: *David Copperfield* (Beginning) G. Sand: *La petite Fadette* Lamartine: *Histoire de la Révolution de 1848* K. Marx: *The Class Struggles in France*	
	St Petersburg-Moscow railway line	Melville: *Moby Dick* Baudelaire: *Du vin et du haschisch* Comte: *Catéchisme positiviste* Nerval: *Les Illuminés* Marx: *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*	Coup d'Etat by Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte (2 December)

Year	Dostoyevsky's life and works	Cultural and artistic life in Russia
1853		**53-63** Tolstoy: *The Cossacks*
1854	Dostoyevsky leaves the penal camp. Extile to Semipalatinsk. Makes the acquaintance of Isayev household and falls in love with the wife. Friendship with the District Attorney of Semipalatinsk Baron Wrangel	
1855		Tolstoy: *Sebastopol*
1856		
1857	Marries Mariya Dmitriyevna Isayeva. Dostoyevsky recovers his *civic rights*	Gontcharov: *Oblomov* Commoners admitted to the university
1858		Turgenev: *A nest of Gentlefolk*
1859	Publishes *The Village of Stepanchikovo*. Returns to St Petersburg but placed under the surveillance of the secret police Publishes *Uncle's Dream*	Turgenev: *On the Eve* A. Ostrovski: *The Storm*

72

	Political and social events in Russia	Cultural and artistic life in Europe	Political and social events in Europe
	Resumption of Russo-Turkish hostilities	Baudelaire : Translation of Poe's *The Raven* Hugo : *Les Châtiments*	
	54-56 Crimean War	Nerval : *Les Filles du feu* Th. Mommsen : *Römische Geschichte*	
	Death of Nicholas I Accession of Alexander II	Dickens : *Little Doritt*	
	Treaty of Paris. Amnesty in Poland	Hugo : *Les Contemplations* Tocqueville : *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution*	
	Abolition of military colonies	Baudelaire : *Les Fleurs du mal* Champfleury : *Le réalisme* (manifesto) Flaubert : *Madame Bovary* H. Spencer : *Essays*	
		Sainte-Beuve : *Les Causeries du lundi* Ibsen : *The Vikings at Helgeland*	
	Annexation of the Eastern Caucasus	Darwin : *On the Origin of Species by means of Natural Section* Hugo : *La Légende des Siècles* John Stuart Mill : *On Liberty*	**59-70** Unification of Italy

Year	Dostoyevsky's life and works	Cultural and artistic life in Russia
1860	Publishes *Souvenirs from the House of Dead*	
1861	Founding of the journal *Time* Publishes *The Insulted and Injured*	
1862	Dostoyevsky travels abroad: Paris, London, Cologne, Italy	Turgenev: *Father and Son* Chernyshevsky: *What is to be done?*
1863	*Winter Notes on Summer Impressions*. Banning of *Time*. Travels abroad: Switzerland, Italy	N. Nerkrassov: *Red Nosed Frost*
1864	Founds *Epoch*. Death of his wife and of his brother. Debts. Publishes *Notes from Underground*	
1865	Travel abroad to Wiesbaden	Leskov: *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsemsk District* **65-69** Tolstoy: *War and Peace*
1866	*Crime and Punishment* and *The Gambler*	

Political and social events in Russia	Cultural and artistic life in Europe	Political and social events in Europe
Foundation of Vladivostok **60's and 70's**: Alexander IIs great reforms	**1860 env. Age d'or du roman européen: Dickens, Dumas, Hugo, Flaubert, Tourgueniev, Dostoïevski, Tolstoï** Baudelaire: *Les Paradis artificiels* A.C. Swinburne: *La Reine-Mère*	
Abolition of slaves Autonomy in Poland	G. Eliot: *Silas Marner*	
	Hugo: *Les Misérables* Leconte de Lisle: *Poèmes barbares* E. Spencer: *First Principles*	Universal Exhibition, Crystal Palace, London
Uprising in Poland	Ibsen: *The Pretenders* Renan: *Vie de Jésus* Baudelaire: *Le peintre de la vie moderne*	
Administrative and judicial reforms	Vigny: *Les Destinées* (Posthumous) Verne: *Voyage au centre de la terre*	Founding of the First International (London) War of the Danish Duchies: dividing of Schleswig-Holstein between Prussia and Austria
Beginning of the conquest of Central Asia (until 1884)	Cl. Bernard: *Introduction à l'étude de la médecine expérimentale* Mendel: *The Laws of Heredity* L. Carroll: *Alice in Wonderland*	
Attempt on the life of the Tsar. Beginning of the movement towards the people (until 1878)	Le Parnasse Contemporain Larousse: *Dictionnaire encyclopédique du XIX*e	Prussia victorious over Austria at Sadowa

Year	Dostoyevsky's life and works	Cultural and artistic life in Russia
1867	Marries Anna Grigorevna Snitkina, his secretary. Goes off to live abroad for four years. Travels to Dresden, Baden and Basel. Hears Bakunin at the Congress of Peace	Turgenev: *Smoke*
1868	*The Idiot*, written abroad Plans a novel on atheism February: Birth of a daughter, Sonja. May: Sonja dies	
1869	Birth of a second daughter Dostoyevsky draws on the Ivanov affair for *The Devils*	Gontcharov: *The Precipice*
1870	*The Eternal Husband* Franco-Prussian war Dostoyevsky comments on the events in Europe in his *Diary* and in his correspondence	Saltykov-Schedrin: *History of a City*
1871	Begins *The Devils* Huge losses at roulette at Wiesbaden. Decides to stop gambling. Birth of a son in Petersburg, Fyodor	
1872	Serves as editor of the *Citizen*	**72-80**: Saltykov-Schedrin: *The Golovlyov Family*

Political and social events in Russia	Cultural and artistic life in Europe	Political and social events in Europe
Alaska sold to the United States	Marx : *Das Kapital* (I) Ibsen : *Peer Gynt* Zola : *Thérèse Raquin*	Confederation of Northern Germany
	Daudet : *Le Petit Chose* Zola : *Préface for Thérèse Raquin*	
The revolutionary society "The People's Will", headed by Nechayev has the student Ivanov killed for reasons of disobedience	Flaubert : *L'Education sentimentale* Lautréamont : *Les chants de Maldoror* Verlaine : *Les Fêtes galantes*	
Municipal reform	Rimbaud : *Un cœur sous une soutane* Verne : *Autour de la lune*	Franco-Prussian War First Vatican Council : dogma of papal infallibility
Nechayev's trial. Reactions in the universities and schools	R. Carroll : *Through the Looking Glass* Rimbaud : *Le Bateau ivre* Zola : *Les Rougon-Macquart*	Proclamation of the German Empire ; beginning of the Kulturkampf ; Third Republic in France ; crushing of the Paris Commune
	Andersen : *Fairytales* Nietzsche : *The Birth of Tragedy* Littré : *Dictionnaire de la langue française*	**81-82** : Jules Ferry laws on primary education

Year	Dostoyevsky's life and works	Cultural and artistic life in Russia
1873	Publishes the *Diary of a Writer* Dostoyevsky writes articles in the *Citizen* on the political situation in France (attempted restoration of Count Chambord)	Death of the poet Tyutchev **73-77**: Tolstoy: *Anna Karenina*
1874	Spends time abroad	Leskov: *A Fallen Family*
1875	A son, Alekse, is born *A Raw Youth*	Melnikov-Pechersky: *In the Forest*
1876	*Diary of a Writer* *A Gentle Spirit*	Turgenev: *Virgin Soil*
1877	*The Dream of a Ridiculous Man*	
1878		
1879	*The Brothers Karamazov*	

Political and social events in Russia	Cultural and artistic life in Europe	Political and social events in Europe
League of the Three Emperors (Alexander II, William I and Francis Joseph)	Rimbaud: *Une saison en enfer* Zola: *Le Ventre de Paris* Verne: *Le Tour du monde en 80 jours*	
Military reform	**Beginning of Impressionnism: Monet, Renoir, Degas** Marx: *Critique of the Gotha Programme* Zola: *La Faute de l'Abbé Mouret*	
	Mark Twain: *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* Nietzsche: *Wagner at Beyreuth* Mallarmé: *L'Après-midi d'un faune*	
77-78: Russo-Turkish War	Zola: *L'Assomoir* Hugo: *La Légende des siècles*	
Attempt on the life of Tsar by Vera Zasulich and wave of terrorist attacks (until 81)	Nietzche: *Human, Too Human*	Congress and Treaty of Berlin; Independence of Romania, Montenegro and Serbia
	Henry James: *Daisy Miller* Schopenhauer: *The Basis of Morality* Büchner: *Woyzeck* (posthumous) Ibsen: *A Doll's House* Strinberg: *The Red Room*	Austro-German Dual Alliance

Year	Dostoyevsky's life and works	Cultural and artistic life in Russia	
1880	Speech on Pushkin		
1881	Dostoyevsky dies		

	Political and social events in Russia	Cultural and artistic life in Europe	Political and social events in Europe
	Commission Against Subversion	Rodin : *The Thinker* Exposition des Indépendants Nietzsche : *The Travemmer and his Shadow* Maupassant : *Contes, nouvelles*	
	Alexander II assassinated by nihilists	Ibsen : *Les Revenants*	

Sales agents for publications of the Council of Europe
Agents de vente des publications du Conseil de l'Europe

AUSTRALIA/AUSTRALIE
Hunter Publications, 58A, Gipps Street
AUS-3066 COLLINGWOOD, Victoria

AUSTRIA/AUTRICHE
Gerold und Co., Graben 31
A-1011 VIENNA 1

BELGIUM/BELGIQUE
La Librairie européenne SA
Av. A. Jonnart 50
B-1200 BRUSSELS 20

CANADA
Renouf Publishing Company Limited
1294 Algoma Road
CDN-OTTAWA ONT K1B 3W8

CYPRUS/CHYPRE
MAM
The House of the Cyprus Book
PO Box 1722, CY-NICOSIA

DENMARK/DANEMARK
Munksgaard
Book and Subscription Service
PO Box 2148
DK-1016 COPENHAGEN K

FINLAND/FINLANDE
Akateeminen Kirjakauppa
Keskuskatu 1, PO Box 218
SF-00381 HELSINKI

GERMANY/ALLEMAGNE
Minerva GmbH
Buch u. Zeitschriftenimport
Morgenstern Straße 37
D-60596 FRANKFURT

GREECE/GRÈCE
Librairie Kauffmann
Mavrokordatou 9, GR-ATHINAI 106 78

IRELAND/IRLANDE
Government Stationery Office
Publications Section
Bishop Street, IRL-DUBLIN 8

ITALY/ITALIE
Libreria Commissionaria Sansoni
Via Duca di Calabria, 1/1
Casella Postale 552, I-50125 FLORENCE

LUXEMBOURG
Librairie Bourbon
(Imprimerie Saint-Paul)
11, rue Bourbon
L-1249 LUXEMBOURG

NETHERLANDS/PAYS-BAS
InOr-publikaties, PO Box 202
NL-7480 AE HAAKSBERGEN

SDU Staatsdrukkerij/Uitgeverij
Christoffel Plantijnstraat 2 Postbus 20014
NL-2500 EA DEN HAAG

NORWAY/NORVÈGE
Akademika, A/S Universitetsbokhandel
PO Box 84, Blindern
N-0314 OSLO

PORTUGAL
Livraria Portugal, Rua do Carmo, 70
P-1200 LISBON

SPAIN/ ESPAGNE
Mundi-Prensa Libros SA
Castelló 37, E-28001 MADRID

Librería Internacional Aedos
Consejo de Ciento, 391
E-08009 BARCELONA

Librería de la Generalitat
Rambla dels Estudis, 118
E-08002 BARCELONA

Librería de la Generalitat de Catalunya
Gran Via Jaume I, 38, E-17001 GIRONA

SWEDEN/SUÈDE
Aktiebolaget CE Fritzes
Regeringsgatan 12, Box 163 56
S-10327 STOCKHOLM

SWITZERLAND/SUISSE
Buchhandlung Heinimann & Co.
Kirchgasse 17, CH-8001 ZURICH

TURKEY/TURQUIE
Pres Gazette Kitap
Nakibahce Sokak 15
Cagaloglu, TR-ISTANBUL

UNITED KINGDOM/ROYAUME-UNI
HMSO, Agency Section
51 Nine Elms Lane
GB-LONDON SW8 5DR

UNITED STATES and CANADA/
ETATS-UNIS et CANADA
Manhattan Publishing Company
1 Croton Point Avenue, PO Box 650
CROTON, NY 10520

STRASBOURG
Librairie internationale Kléber
1, rue des Francs-Bourgeois
F-67000 STRASBOURG

Librairie des Facultés
2-12, rue de Rome
F-67000 STRASBOURG

Librairie Kléber
Palais de l'Europe
F-67075 Strasbourg Cedex

00 603

At the end of the twentieth century, as western Europe and the Russian Federation undergo great political, cultural and social changes, the work of a writer such as Dostoyevsky deserves serious study. How, in an equally troubled period, did a Russian intellectual see himself in the European context?

By reference to various of Dostoyevsky's romanesque works, this monograph, published as part of the project "A Secondary Education for Europe", proposes an account of the development of the European awareness of an author nevertheless greatly attached to his native land, and of his influence on European culture.

Council of Europe Press

ISBN 92-871-2277-6

83